

NATIONAL THREAT LANDSCAPE STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

This assessment is intended to provide situational awareness of threats with potential national-level implications related to public order, public safety and the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The information in this assessment is based on reporting from RCMP Divisions, law enforcement partners, searches conducted against RCMP holdings, and open source resources (current as of 2021-06-29). The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on emerging threats and will provide updates on a periodic or as required basis.

KEY POINTS

- Threats to officer and public safety arising from the public order events discussed below are currently assessed as low. Law enforcement partners have not reported on protestors overtly advocating for violence.
- Threats to the vaccine supply chain and critical infrastructure Health Sector during the vaccine rollout are currently assessed as low.

THREATS TO PUBLIC SAFETY

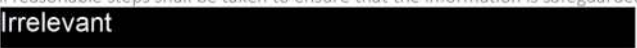
FISHERIES DISPUTE – ST. MARYS BAY, NOVA SCOTIA (NS)

Sipekne'katik First Nation community fishers previously advised that they intended to relaunch a fishery this June in St. Marys Bay outside of the federal commercial season and without federal licenses.¹ News reports indicated that the Indigenous fishers intend to fish in the St. Marys Bay location under communal food, social and ceremonial licenses, which do not have commercial season restrictions.² The Hon. Bernadette Jordan, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard recently stated that Indigenous fishers must have a federal license this season, and that federal regulations in connection with moderate livelihood fisheries will be enforced.³ In September of 2020, the Sipekne'katik launched a self-regulated lobster fishery, which was met with opposition from non-Indigenous commercial fishers. Rising tensions between the groups resulted in violence, when approximately 150 commercial fishers attempted to gain entry into the Indigenous fishers' lobster pound; vehicles were set alight, the lobster pound destroyed by fire and the Indigenous fishers' catch damaged.⁴

Recent media reporting indicated that Sipekne'katik First Nation plans to relaunch the fishery have been delayed until there are enough people to provide their own security to protect their traps.⁵ As of this writing, no start date has been identified.

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Currently this dispute is isolated to “H” Division; the IMCIT has not identified information to suggest other national implications. In the past, controversy surrounding these fishing rights has resulted in public order events in Nova Scotia.⁶ No events specific to this issue have been identified.

OLD-GROWTH LOGGING - SOUTHWEST VANCOUVER ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA (BC)

The RCMP enforcement of an injunction in an area where blockades opposed to old-growth logging have been set-up has resulted in 343 arrests since August of 2020.⁷ The arrests and issue of old-growth logging protection have gained attention from environmental groups globally. Thus far, one peaceful solidarity action took place in Toronto (a peaceful protest at Queen’s Park, followed by a peaceful march through downtown Toronto), with another event planned for Calgary on July 2nd.⁸ s.37

s.37

In addition to the logging blockades, protests have also occurred in support of the logging industry.¹⁰ These protests have been largely peaceful, although the media has reported some altercations between forestry workers and protesters.¹¹ Although BC approved the request of three First Nations groups to temporarily defer old-growth logging for two years in part of their territories, open source information suggests protests are likely to continue until old-growth is permanently protected.¹²

Continued enforcement of the injunction is likely to be perceived negatively by the protesters and could spark more solidarity actions across the country. Updates from “E” Division indicate concern for the safety of protesters, based on the tactics being used to breach the injunction.¹³ Moreover, the longer this dispute continues, the likelihood of conflict between pro and anti-logging parties increases.

IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED CRIMINALITY

ANTI-LOCKDOWN AND ANTI-MASK PROTESTS

Protests opposed to public health restrictions are occurring across the country on a weekly basis. To date, law enforcement partners have not reported on protestors overtly advocating for violence.

Since April of 2020, anti-lockdown public order events in Canadian cities have attracted participation from various ethno-nationalist groups who, in previous years (2016-2019), had a visible presence at protests advocating for positions considered to be anti-immigration and anti-Muslim in nature. It is important to note, however, that anti-lockdown protests are also attracting individuals that are not aligned with any specific ideology or group, but are experiencing pandemic fatigue due to economic strain, business closures, job losses, or other personal hardships. The easing of public health measures in several provinces may reduce future attendance at these ongoing protests.

Other than public health risks, no other public safety threats related to the ongoing protests have been identified. With the exception of an event in Montreal on 2021-04-11, which resulted in vandalism and arrests, the majority of these protests have been peaceful and only resulted in tickets for violating public health measures.

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“WHITE LIVES MATTER” MARCHES AND POSTERING CAMPAIGN

“White Lives Matter” (WLM) public order events have been advertised internationally since March of 2021. Although posters with WLM branding have been observed in several Canadian cities, public order events have been confined to Toronto with events occurring on April 11th, May 8th and June 5th - each event attracting five or fewer participants and with no reported incidents of violence.

Additional global protests by WLM groups in 2021 are set for July 10th, August 21st, September 18th, October 16th, November 13th and December 18th 2021. Thus far, only one WLM event is set for Canada: July 10th in Toronto. No additional Canadian locations have been identified thus far. Moreover, open source queries and information from law enforcement partners have yielded no specific intelligence to indicate that these events will pose a risk to public safety from protesters or counter-protesters.

CANADA DAY PUBLIC ORDER EVENTS

#CancelCanadaDay public order events are planned across the country, largely in response to the remains found at former residential schools in Canada.¹⁴ In Ontario, blockades at multiple locations on the TransCanada highway are being organized that could lead to confrontations, however, no specific information related to the potential locations is available at this time.¹⁵ Additional public order events in several Canadian cities have been identified but there is no specific intelligence to indicate a risk to public safety or officer safety at this time.

Many Canadian cities have cancelled planned Canada Day celebrations, generating mixed reactions.¹⁶ The potential for conflict exists where rallies acknowledging Canada Day have been planned and overlap with #CancelCanadaDay events. A Dominion Day Rally in Ottawa to celebrate Canada Day has been promoted by anti-lockdown groups and has the potential to cross paths with #CancelCanadaDay events already planned in the area.

CRIMINAL THREATS TO THE COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT

Since the development of the vaccine, activities to defraud individuals and organizations by marketing fake vaccines, phishing scams, and other frauds have been reported. Health service agencies across jurisdictions report receipt of fraudulent emails purporting to offer supplies of vaccines.

Anti-vaccine protesters have appeared outside vaccination clinics and school board properties. There are no reports of violence targeting frontline workers at these protests at this time, and events for this reporting period have not affected vaccine appointments.

Nationally, several businesses, police detachments, and health clinics have reported a number of incidents involving the receipt of “cease and desist” letters ordering the end of masking, vaccination, and lockdown mandates.¹⁷ These letters appear to be sent or hand-delivered on behalf of a self-identified new government leader, based in BC, who claims to be Head of State and Commander in Chief of Canada. These incidents currently appear to pose a nuisance rather than a threat to frontline workers.

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Irrelevant

Issued by: Ideologically Motivated Criminal Intelligence Team (IMCIT)

Approved by: Director, Directorate of Strategic Intelligence, Federal Policing National Intelligence

¹ <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-s-mi-kmaq-fisher-says-his-movements-are-being-watched-and-his-traps-seized-by-dfo-1.5434949>

² <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/sipekne-katik-pivots-on-controversial-lobster-fishery-1.6043018>

³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/lobster-catch-destroyed-vehicle-burned-as-tension-rises-over-indigenous-fishery-in-n-s-1.5144540>

⁵ <https://www.halifaxtoday.ca/amp/local-news/ns-first-nation-further-delays-lobster-fishing-saying-it-risks-losing-traps-3838223>

⁶ <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/nova-scotia-lobster-fishermen-protest-out-of-control-first-nations-fishery-1.5106027>

⁷ <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=2130&languageId=1&contentId=70114>

⁸ <https://www.instagram.com/stopoldgrowthlogging/> <https://www.instagram.com/p/CQooSfQhp6z/>

⁹ RCMP E Division, Division Intelligence Analysis Team, Criminal Intelligence Section

¹⁰ <https://www.cowichanvalleycitizen.com/news/vancouver-island-logging-supporters-rally-in-mesachie-lake/>

¹¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/altercation-video-loggers-protesters-1.6015920>

¹² <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/fairy-creek-bc-defers-old-growth-logging-1.6059914>

<https://twitter.com/SaveFairyCreek/status/1402428963499114498>

¹³ <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=2130&languageId=1&contentId=70114>

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/events/213759960588847/>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/cowessess-graves-unmarked-residential-school-marieval-1.6077797>

¹⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/events/759101981438450/>

¹⁶ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/cancel-canada-day-canadian-voices-1.6076022>

¹⁷ <https://www.vice.com/en/article/3aqvkw/qanons-are-harassing-people-at-the-whim-of-a-woman-they-say-is-canadas-queen-romana-didulo>